

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present Amendment, claims 1, 3 and 4 will have been amended and claims 8-18 will have been submitted for consideration by the Examiner. The amendments to the claims do not narrow the scope thereof and have not been made in view of the prior art. Rather, the amendments serve to clarify the claim recitations.

In view of the herein contained amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding rejection set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action together with an indication of the allowability of all the claims pending in the present application, in due course. Such action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate and proper.

Initially, Applicant wishes to respectfully thank the Examiner for indicating acceptance of the drawings submitted on October 2, 2003. Applicant further wishes to thank the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 as well as for confirming receipt of the certified copy of the priority document.

Applicant additionally wishes to respectfully thank the Examiner for considering the documents cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed in the present application on January 9, 2004, by the return of the signed and initialed PTO-1449 Form attached thereto.

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner rejected all of claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by SHINTANI (JP 2001-215381).

Applicant respectfully traverses the above rejection and submits that it is inappropriate with respect to the combination of features recited in Applicant's claims.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejection together with an indication of the allowability of all the claims pending in the present application, in due course.

Initially, Applicant notes that the reference relied upon by the Examiner was cited in the above-noted Information Disclosure Statement together with a full English language translation thereof. Nevertheless, the features recited in Applicant's claims are not taught, disclosed nor rendered obvious therein. Accordingly, the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 is submitted to be inappropriate. Further, it is respectfully submitted that even a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 would also be inappropriate due to the shortcomings of the disclosure of the SHINTANI reference relied upon by the Examiner.

In setting forth the rejection, the Examiner asserts that a first angular groove is disclosed by SHINTANI as 52a. It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner is incorrect. 52a is a cam follower pen as set forth on page 16 of the English language translation at line 15. Similarly, the Examiner asserts that SHINTANI discloses a second angular groove 41a. Again the Examiner is incorrect. 41a is a zoom driving area which is part of the cam groove 41, as set forth at page 14 of the English language translation at line 19.

Accordingly, for at least these reasons it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's rejection is inappropriate and reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

Moreover, since Applicant's claim 1 recites the light shield ring as having portions which extend into the first and second angular grooves, and since as noted above,

neither 52a nor 41a is an angular groove, there is certainly no light shield ring disclosed by SHINTANI that includes the features recited in Applicant's claim 1.

Nor is there any logical reason for inserting a light shield ring in either a zoom driving area of a cam groove or into a cam follower pin. Such insertion would appear to render the lens barrel substantially inoperative.

Yet additionally, it is respectfully submitted that the light shield ring of Applicant's claim 1, which is defined to have an outer flange portion that extends radially outward from a rear end of a cylindrical portion is not disclosed, taught nor rendered obvious by any component of SHINTANI. In this regard, Applicant notes that claim 1 recites and requires that the cylindrical portion is inserted to and is slidably movable relative to the first angular groove and that the outer flange portion is insertable into and is slidably movable relative to the second angular groove. There is no disclosure of such features in SHINTANI et al.

Accordingly, for each of these reasons and certainly for all of the above reasons it is respectfully that SHINTANI is an inappropriate basis for the rejection of any of the claims in the present application under 35 U.S.C. § 102 or even under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

The light proof member 46 of SHINTANI, is not held between the inner and outer rings which the Examiner characterizes as 44 and 40. Rather, as explicitly set forth at page 16 of the English language translation, the light-proof member 46 is disposed between a frontward end of the lens holding tube 44 and the lens holding member 52. Therefore, the light-proof member 46 is not in any way attached to the outer ring 40.

Further, the inner ring 44 and the flange wall 52 are fixed with respect to each other. Thus, there is no relative motion between these elements as recited in

Applicant's claim 1. In this regard, the Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to page 17 of the English language translation of the SHINTANI reference. Lines 11-16 thereof explicitly set forth that a change in relative position between the lens holding member 52 and the lens holding tube does not occur, and thus, a skewing problem of the second lens group is eliminated.

By the present Response, Applicant has submitted a number of additional claims for consideration by the Examiner. These claims are submitted to be patentable over the reference cited by the Examiner by defining a combination of features not taught, disclosed nor rendered obvious by the disclosure of JP 2001-215381. These claims are being submitted in order to afford Applicant the scope of protection to which he is entitled. Accordingly, examination and favorable consideration of the newly submitted claims is respectfully requested together with an indication of the allowability thereof, in due course.

In view of all of the above, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding rejection of the pending claims together with an indication of the allowability of all the claims pending in the present application, in due course. Such action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate and proper.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicant has made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believes that he has now done so. Applicant has discussed the disclosure of the reference relied upon by the Examiner and has pointed out the significant and substantial shortcomings thereof with respect to the combination of features recited in Applicant's claims. Additionally, Applicant has discussed the recitations of the pending claims and has pointed out various features not taught, disclosed nor rendered obvious by the reference relied upon in the Examiner's rejection. Accordingly, Applicant has provided a clear evidentiary basis supporting the patentability of all the claims in the present application and respectfully requests an indication to such effect in due course.

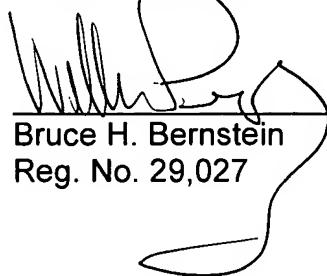
Applicant has submitted several additional claims for consideration. With respect to these claims, Applicant has provided a basis for the patentability thereof in accordance with the features recited therein.

The amendments to the claims made in this amendment have not been made to overcome the prior art, and thus, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should there be any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

June 22, 2005
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, VA 20191
(703) 716-1191

Respectfully submitted,
Hitoshi TANAKA


Bruce H. Bernstein
Reg. No. 29,027

William Pieprz
Reg. No. 33,630